

## August 2013 Newsletter

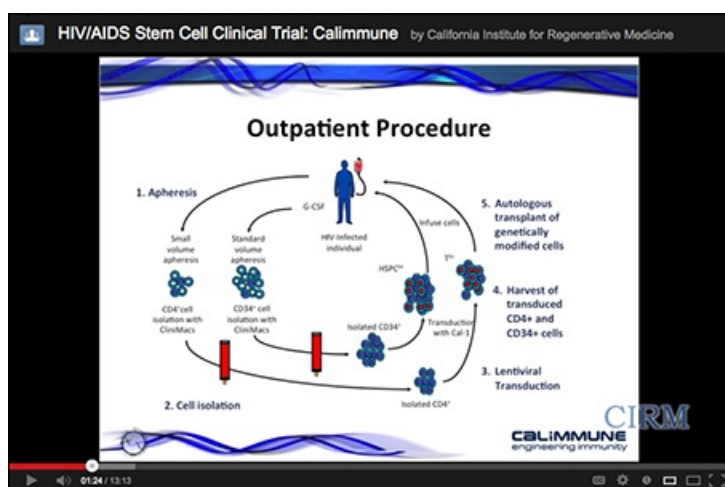
### CIRM August Newsletter

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### Calimmune Begins CIRM-Funded Stem Cell-Based HIV/AIDS Clinical Trial

On July 9th, Calimmune, Inc. announced they had treated the first patient in a clinical trial involving the use of an innovative gene-based stem cell therapy to help protect individuals infected with HIV from the effects of the AIDS virus. The trial which is funded by CIRM focuses on a protein called CCR5 that plays a critical role in enabling HIV to infect cells. Blocking CCR5 may provide the cells a protective shield against HIV. The goal of this Phase I/II trial is to assess the safety of the therapy, to determine the ease of use and feasibility of the approach for HIV/AIDS patients and to evaluate what, if any, side effects there may be.

- Read our press release and blog about this innovative study



### CIRM Governing Board Approves Alpha Stem Cell Clinics Network Initiative

At its July meeting, the CIRM governing board approved a \$70 million plan to create a new statewide network of sites that will act as a hub for stem cell clinical trials. The goal of the Alpha Stem Cell Clinics Network is to support and accelerate clinical trials for programs funded by the agency, as well as those developed elsewhere by academic researchers, clinicians and pharmaceutical companies. An additional goal of the network will be educating people seeking such therapies, or interested in enrolling in clinical trials for testing them. The Alpha Clinics network will provide packages of reliable information as well as patient counselors who can explain the reliable information and data that this initiative will create. The network will consist of up to five clinic sites at established academic institutions and a coordinating center to manage regulatory procedures, sharing data and patient education.

- Read our press release and blog about the board's decision
- Read the CIRM Alpha Stem Cell Clinics Network white paper

## Through Their Lens: Stem Cell High School Interns Document Their Experiences Through Social Media

The CIRM Creativity Awards support summer internship programs that introduce high school students to stem cell science and foster the next generation of scientists. This year, we decided to let the students tell their own stories about life in the lab and their hopes for the future. We've received countless Instagram photos, over 50 videos, and several blog essays from the students. This summer's program will culminate in a Creativity Awards Poster Day event on August 12th where the students will share the results of their projects.



View the CIRM interns' Instagram photos



THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2013

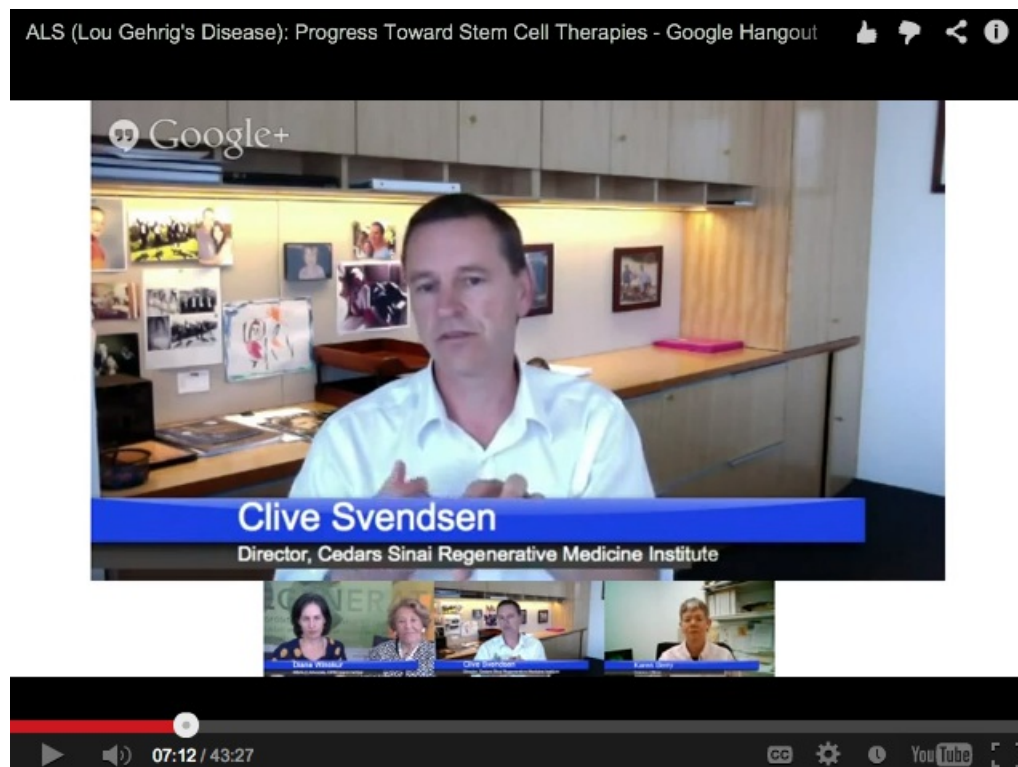
### Through their lens: Jessica Wang learns that cures come out of long hours in the lab

This summer we're sponsoring high school interns in stem cell labs throughout California. We asked those students to contribute to our [Instagram photos](#) and [YouTube videos](#) about life in the lab, and write about their experiences.

Jessica Wang, 17, is a senior at Walnut High School. She is a summer student at the City of Hope and works in the Department of Pathology.

[Read their blog essays](#)

## CIRM Hosts its First Live Google Hangout: Progress Toward Stem Cell Therapies for ALS



On July 3rd, CIRM hosted its first-ever Google Hangout to discuss progress toward stem cell therapies for Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. ALS is a neurological disorder that leads to progressive loss of muscle function. Most people with ALS die within 3 to 5 years from the onset of symptoms. Dr. Clive Svendsen, a CIRM grantee and director of the Cedar Sinai Regenerative Medicine Institute, joined the hangout to describe his efforts to bring a stem cell based ALS treatment to clinical trials. Diane Winokur, a long-time ALS patient advocate and CIRM governing board member and CIRM science officer Dr. Karen Berry also participated in the live webcast. Amy Adams, CIRM's communications manager, moderated the conversation.

- [Read our blog about the webcast](#)

## Phil Pizzo Honored for Service to Agency; Three New Board Members Sworn In







At its July meeting, the CIRM governing board meeting honored Philip Pizzo, MD for his long service to the stem cell agency as a board member since the agency began. Dr. Pizzo was Dean of the Stanford School of Medicine from 2001 to 2012 and previously was Chief of the National Cancer Institute's pediatric department. His clinical research focused on pediatric cancer and pediatric HIV infections, including some of the earliest work on antiviral treatments for HIV-positive children. He left the Board when he retired from Stanford. Board chair Thomas also swore in three new members: Dr. Lloyd Minor, from Stanford; Al Rowlett, the new Patient Advocate for Mental Health; and Dr. Lars Berglund from UC Davis, who is the alternate for Ken Burtis.

- [Read our blog about Pizzo and the new board members](#)

### **CIRM President Alan Trounson's July Stem Cell Research Picks**

Each month CIRM President Alan Trounson reports on advances in stem cell science by highlighting recently published papers from CIRM grantees and other leading research teams around the world. In the leading story for July, Peking University researchers report that they produced pluripotent stem cells by reprogramming adult cells using chemicals instead of genetic factors.

- [Read the president's July report](#)

### **1300 and Counting: The Latest Publications on CIRM-funded Research**

With over 1300 published discoveries, CIRM grantees are making steady progress on understanding the molecular basis of stem cell biology and moving stem cell-based therapies toward clinical trials. Here is a partial list of science journals that published CIRM-funded research in July along with press releases from the grantees' home institutions and entries from the CIRM Stem Cell Research Blog:

#### ***July 1st - Journal of Clinical Investigation***

- [UCLA Press Release: UCLA stem cell gene therapy for sickle cell disease advances toward clinical trials](#)
- [CIRM Blog: Sickle cell disease therapy hits major milestone on path to clinical trial](#)

#### ***July 1st - Nature***

- UCSF Press Release: Vitamin C Helps Control Gene Activity in Stem Cells
- CIRM Blog: Vitamin C affects how genes are expressed in stem cells

#### **July 17th - *The Journal of Bone Growth and Surgery***

- Stanford Press Release: Protein bath helps stimulate old marrow to form bone, study finds
- CIRM Blog: Quicker healing for older bones

#### **July 19th - *Nature Cell Biology***

- UCSF Press Release: Stem Cell Discovery Furthers Research on Cell-Based Therapy and Cancer
- CIRM Blog: Taking a bite out of stem cell mysteries: a new role for a cancer protein

#### **July 24th - *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences***

- Sanford-Burnham Blog: Scientists discover a novel molecular pathway underlying neural stem-cell biology
- CIRM Blog: CIRM grantees find network of proteins that control neural stem cells

#### **July 26th - *Cell Reports***

- Stanford Blog: Longevity gene tied to nerve stem cell regeneration, say Stanford researchers
- CIRM Blog: The key to longer life: a gene that preserves neural stem cells

### **Upcoming CIRM Events**

#### **Upcoming CIRM Governing Board Meeting**

**August 28th:** The CIRM governing board will hold its 5th meeting of 2013 at the Marriott in La Jolla. The agenda and details will be posted to the **meetings page** 10 days before the event.

**August 12th-18th:** "CIRM Spotlight on Genomics: Understanding Our Genes - A Step to Personalized Medicine" airs seven times on the University of California Television (UCTV). Follow this link and click the TV Schedule for air times. Click here for information on where to watch in your area. You can also view the seminar anytime on our video page.

### **CIRM Funding Opportunities**

**RFA 13-04: External Innovation Pilot Program** - Prior to submitting an application, a PI must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) describing the proposed project. CIRM will evaluate the LOI -- refer to Section VIII.A. of the RFA for evaluation criteria. **This RFA is targeted at only the most exceptional proposals: CIRM expects to support only one or two such projects each year.**

**RFA 13-03: CIRM Strategic Partnership III Awards** - CIRM intends to offer repeat calls under this initiative every 6-9 months. The focus, scope and objective may differ with each solicitation. **CIRM will conduct a webinar for prospective applicants on August 7, 2013 at 11 am -12 noon (PDT)** to address questions about the RFA and application process. Click here to register for the webinar.

**PA 12-08: CIRM Patent Assistance Fund Awards** - Application opportunities on a monthly basis until June 30, 2014  
**Eligibility: Only Technology Transfer Officials at current CIRM Grantee institutions are eligible to apply for funds under this program.**

**PA 08-06: CIRM Conference Grants** - Applications for conference grants will be accepted, reviewed and approved

Get more info about CIRM RFAs

Sign up to receive CIRM funding announcements

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